

Gerry Fowler, MP, replies to criticisms of the DES

Problems in planning an overall education strategy

There is a new interest in the planning of educational development in Britain. Its awakening coincides with the end of the long period of euphoric expansion, when most demands from teachers and consumers could be satisfied sooner or later.

Its focus is the planning system of the Department of Education and Science, of which report from the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development in 1975, a former Minister, Lord Crowther-Hunt, and a House of Commons committee in 1976, have been highly critical.

I wish to argue, not that all is well, but that some of the criticisms have been wrong-headed, and others only partially valid. There has been an excessive emphasis upon organizational change as the remedy to pervasive weaknesses in policy planning. Too often critics have failed to examine in depth examples of the planning process in operation.

The OECD examiners pointed to the department's failure to evolve a strategy plan for the education service as a whole, based upon an examination of ultimate goals and objectives rather than the means of implementing intermediate aims. Nevertheless, they wisely stated at the beginning of their report that: "In the United Kingdom... government is conducted within a setting of understandings, restraints, and mutual forebearances that can only in part be defined".

When applied to DES this formulation of the British way of running government refers to more than the conventional "partnership" between the department, the LEAs and the teachers. It subsumes shared beliefs about what does what, and who should be consulted about or participate in what decision, as well as common attitudes towards the purposes of educational endeavour and investment.

Among the most powerful vested interests in education are the teacher unions. Their view cannot be disregarded; but neither can it at any given moment be fully accommodated. The attitude of the National Union of Teachers to the new Institutes illustrates the difficulty.

The union argues strongly that the teacher-training capacity of these former colleges of education should not be reduced nearly as sharply as the Government would accept, the transition of total colleges to diversified institutions of higher education would be greatly eased, and with it the problem of higher education as a whole in adapting to the smaller age-cohort of the mid-1980s.

But the NUT also argues that there should be no unemployment among trained teachers seeking posts, that the relative salaries of teachers should be maintained, and that there should be no worsening of conditions of work within the schools.

I assent to every proposition in this list—except when I look to the long-term policy implications for education as a whole. The salaries of teachers at all levels account for 70 per cent of recurrent expenditure on education, and for more than 50 per cent of total expenditure. The maintenance of what can in professional terms properly be described as conditions of work pushes up those proportions considerably.

Granted that some capital expenditure is essential, there is not much left over in conditions of resource constraint for new activities embodying new objectives. Since those entering teacher education in 1978 do not emerge until 1981 or 1982, and must then be employed with virtual security of tenure, the adoption of all its policies sharply narrows policy choice for many years to come.



... Planning must be conducted in the open. But it is scarcely practicable to conduct an open debate about the purposes and structure of the whole education service simultaneously.

projected demand for higher education has been revised downwards no less than the income resources have been devoted to the reorganization of secondary education, but the cuts required in teacher training have been much sharper than then suggested. What has happened has been a model example of "disjointed incrementalism"—provided that phrase is held to cover decrementalism too.

Let us assume that the 1972 statement had been fuller, setting out all the arguments for and against alternative policies, and relating them to clearly stated ultimate goals; and that a had been produced after some years of complex public debate, negotiation, and consultation.

It is likely that, while the present Government was still in power, the document examined some (not all) of the policies that have been adopted since. Every minister knows that within the departmental planning organization, objectives and policy options are considered which could never be his own.

The DES does engage in long-term contingency planning; loyalty to the Secretary of State demands that much of this be done in private. Second, the demographic projections underpinning the 1972 division of resources between teacher education, the polytechnics and the universities, between school education and the rest, and between nursery, primary and secondary within that, are not a system have not been realized. But they were projections, not forecasts.

ployment of the service can take place at any time, but plans will be implemented only in favourable conditions, at exactly the time when it is most difficult to halt existing activities. Policy increments are therefore rarely as dramatic or far-reaching as the theorists might wish, and most significant increments are usually the result of a series of small steps.

None of this explains why the 1972 policy statement omitted any consideration of adult and continuing education, and of 16- to 19-year-olds. Any substantial reevaluation of the overall objectives of the education service should include these sectors, vital both for employment and for the development of the individual.

For adult education the answer seems simple. Compared with the Russell Committee, the mills of Government are a model of unseasonably haste. The committee failed to report until a year after the 1972 White Paper was published. This of itself casts light on one very British method of policy planning in education.

We have relied heavily upon the deliberations of committees or councils, each given the remit of examining a sector of education broadly in its own time. The world moves on. When the committee reports some years later, the focus of educational interest may have changed, and the economic situation will certainly have changed.

The establishment of a committee to consider a sector of education puts policy into aspic. This is why the Central Advisory Council has not been reappointed since 1967. It is equally an objection to the Expenditure Committee's proposal for a standing education commission, which could consider areas of policy only one by one, and would inevitably either freeze each in turn or make some policy and needs had already changed.

The omission of 16- to 19-year-olds from the 1972 strategy is more complex. It seems probable that the Secretary of State at that time did not regard continuing education of those on the margins of schooling and work as a major policy priority. Eighteen months later, under another Government, a group was established to produce a Programme Analysis and Review (PAR) study, ultimately called "Getting Ready for Work".

sary chore rather than a source of opportunity for cross-fertilization, experience and a source of ideas.

Can we, however, believe that the prerequisite of a clear-cut definition of the subject: what it is, what activities it embraces and what qualities of the product are the result of design.

Despite the use of that word "product", where design stands in the production process is never asked and the answer to the question is unwelcome. Much prefer to read declarations about decision-making or some other catchphrase borrowed from the trendy jargon of management studies.

At the same time, many of those responsible for the instruction in the British schools failed to report until a year after the 1972 White Paper was published. This of itself casts light on one very British method of policy planning in education.

Of course, any history of design must accommodate quite narrow boundaries as well as operate with the government's more open and general concept, like art, design is an open concept, a powerful argument for which is that the category of design is one of historical accumulation.

One fault in the government's view of design is that the category of design is one of historical accumulation. The department has just experienced and fresh accretions. The category is not, therefore, I regret the grouping always and everywhere accepted in higher education, nor is equal weight allowed its members. Its divisions were ill-drawn, its edges blurred.

Mistaken identities in the history of design

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particular disciplines to demonstrate equality of status with the fine arts.

The brief for the history of design, then, has been confused, founded upon dubious premises and aimed at scarcely historical goals. Though it has often resulted in forms available to an age, Reyner Banham's aesthetics of specializability and expediency, and the suggestion of the visual environment as a total-continuum was the word misappropriated for this.

By far the most important and repeated of the discussions argued that these notions did not stop at the frontiers between the fine and the design arts. Without needing McLuhan, though *The Mechanical Bride* passed from hand to eager hand, notice was taken of the specific nature of mid-twentieth-century reality, urban, technological, consumerist, communicational.

Tasks previously entrusted to artists had been taken over by masters of other skills and abilities. The new uses differed considerably from each other and in the parts of the process to which they might refer.

The failure of the ideological struggle of art nouveau and, after it, of the *Vkhutemas* and the *Bauhaus*, can be attributed in part to a failure to understand the social reality that made design necessary, and to discover what was the social, as distinct from financial, investment that required design and that design needed.

Design, theory remained apart from the development of consumer society while much of the practice was blindly immersed in it. There proposed the house as a machine for living in, first with the Futurist anticipation of massive counteraction and production of needs, and then with the more elegant theory of Le Corbusier.

The men in the advertising agencies and the media were no less and no more than designers in the studios and the fine art schools. Indeed, there was a suspicion that, continuing as they did a much more traditional and anonymous role in society, they were much nearer the men who built the great cathedrals and painted the great pictures.

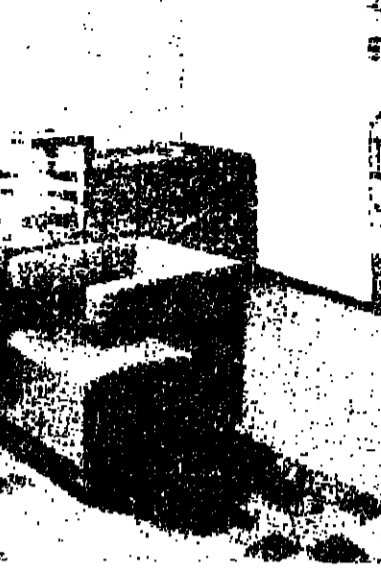
The history of design is as much the history of dreams that money can buy as a history of artefacts; and a consequence of such thinking is the suggestion that the history of design as a specialism within the history of art is the inverse of the real situation.

On the contrary, the history of art is a subsection of the history of design, albeit a very important one with a longer history of its own and of its subject. It is high time, however, that the august categories of academic art history were subjected to fresh scrutiny, and an end put to the coupling of design with ornament.

The attempt to project a history of design leads, then, to a critical position towards art history and towards the assumptions, unquestioned and unquestioning, underlying the practice of design—particularly as to the role of taste and as to the nature of function.

They are not new, nor peculiar to consumer society, but perhaps necessary to it, and the result of a latent nature of these assumptions. Design became a necessary stage in the production process as industrial and large-scale methods replaced the old crafts.

It is curious to extrapolate back into the past, the conceptually separable aspects, shape, surface qualities and the activities specify-



Bauhaus design: sinned against or sinning?

ing them, only possible at this later development of both manufacture and society.

The growth of technology distinguished the relations to production of hand, eye and brain. In those days, a blurred area of activity with imprecise limits of scope and responsibility gradually identified the use of the word "design".

This imprecision was aided by the already existing semantic ambiguity of the word which had acquired from its other and earlier uses. Moreover, the new uses differed considerably from each other and in the parts of the process to which they might refer.

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الجمهورية العربية السورية

Wanted: a path through the confusion of social work training

Another differentiation in future will be between the Certificate of Qualification in Social Work and the projected Certificate of Social Service.

If social work is to make any headway in its efforts to solve social problems, it must reach a comparable level to the medical, legal and other professions, it needs to unify its resources and heal the divisions which exist, not proliferate them.

The Certificate of Social Service should not be doomed to be permanently stigmatized as a qualification quite apart from the CQSW: there should be flexibility within the discipline of social work to allow for this. What matters is how people can be trained, not what qualifications they have.

Some may be able to go straight to the point in assessing the needs of client families, in suggesting suitable remedial, and in creating improvements in a short time; but without some formal training all are certain to have gaps in their knowledge and experience. Even a short course will identify these gaps.

The further implementation of the Seebohm Report by the transfer of other scattered social workers to social services departments is taking a long time to implement. This is due to the insistence that there is an unbridgeable gulf between a social worker who is if used under the direction of a statutory authority. Without authority they are wasting their time and exposing themselves to ridicule, causing delays or even accidents.

Gilvray Adamson

The author is a consultant sociologist.

BOOKS

Centrality of kinship

Mediterranean Family Structures edited by J. G. Perle...

There were so few specialist studies of Mediterranean kinship until now that Africanists have been heard to mutter how it was they came and showed their colleagues how it was done...

It contains 20 essays, set in Lebanon, the Maghreb, Albania, Spain, Italy, Greece and Turkey, and among Palestinian Arabs...

The theme of the book was nothing more precise than the title suggests. The introduction cannot disguise this and does little more than elegantly summarize the papers...

These very original contributions to the debate are more interesting today. An essay which has a somewhat limited impact in some ways is that by the Lebanese Maronite scholar...

In addition to the well-mentioned volume on kinship among the families in other more urban settings, grants and refugees, a volume of telling lies to a family honour (a theme of Jane Austen), polygamy, kinship, it is a fair sized collection of kinship studies...

Ideology and Social Order

ERIC CARLTON Truly interdisciplinary work between history and sociology is rare...

The Dual Vision

Alfred Schutz and the Myth of Phenomenological Social Science ROBERT A. GORMAN Robert Gorman argues that Schutz and his followers fail in their attempts to 'humanize' empirical social science...

Origin and Significance of the Frankfurt School

A Marxist Perspective PHIL SLATER Phil Slater examines the formative and most radical years of the Frankfurt School, during the 1930s...

People of the Mediterranean

An Essay in Comparative Social Anthropology J. DAVIS More than any other area in the world the Mediterranean is a source of historical data...

Routledge & Kegan Paul

39 Stone Street, London WC1

Planning procedures and government

Government and the Planning Process by J. H. Levin Allen & Unwin, £6.50 ISBN 0 04 352039 6

Policy Making in British Government by Brian Smith Martin Robertson, £5.95 and £2.65 ISBN 0 85520 120 7 and 119 3

The study of British government is in a difficult state. Historical and legal descriptions of institutions no longer satisfy and we lack up-to-date systematic texts...

The book derives from studies of the initial stages of the central Llanphyllid new town and Swindon expansion development schemes...

There is good discussion of how commitment is generated in government through the process of 'spousal'. Once officials espouse a scheme, procedures which seem neutral become deterministic...

Plans must be treated cautiously. As Levin says, his commitment theory falls about half way between the 'conspiracy' theory...

A comparison between new town and town expansion procedures, together with a great deal of other evidence, help shape the criteria to apply in planning procedures...

It is patently risky to predict anything more than 15 years ahead whether it be population move-

ments or preferences in life. But the Department of the Environment in large scale urban planning in steel and concrete the future of large numbers of towns and large areas of land.

Brian Smith's book sets out a line up of concepts: policy, power and power explains how power organizations get into policy, while rationality and power are complementary. This is a good textbook which complements Levin's study...

Both books point to the schizophrenic in government must be both rational and not rational. But the responsibility for making our preferences for a better life is called upon to make a contribution to the democratic society...

Among this week's reviewers

P. W. Atkins, author of Molecular Quantum Mechanics, is fellow of Cincinco College, Oxford; E. J. Burge, author of Atomic Nuclei and their Particles, is professor and head of the department of physics at Chelsea College, London; T. J. Cribb is a fellow of Churchill College, Cambridge;

Maurice Milne, senior lecturer in the department of Mathematics, Newcastle Polytechnic, is a Newscaper, of Northumbria University, Durham; Donald Osborne is professor of physics at the University of Anglia; Sydney Pollard is professor of economic history at the University of Cambridge;

Leo Rogers is senior lecturer in mathematics at Bathwick College, Bath; Maurice Milne, senior lecturer in the department of Mathematics, Newcastle Polytechnic, is a Newscaper, of Northumbria University, Durham; Donald Osborne is professor of physics at the University of Anglia; Sydney Pollard is professor of economic history at the University of Cambridge;

Classified Advertisements

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Universities

UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN - NIGERIA

Applications are invited for the following posts: 1. DEPARTMENT OF FOREST RESOURCES MANAGEMENT Lecturers in: (a) Forest Management (b) Silviculture (c) Wood Chemistry

2. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION SERVICES (a) Senior Lecturer (Agricultural Communication) (b) Lecturer Grade II (Rural Social Change)

Candidates for (a) should possess a first degree in forestry, plus considerable practical experience of the methods and problems of tropical forest management...

UNIVERSITY OF DUBLIN Trinity College

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Applications are invited for the above post, from persons who have an interest in analytical methods. Salary Scale: £3,321-£7,108.

UNIVERSITY OF SALFORD Department of Civil Engineering

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Applications should possess a good Honours Degree in an appropriate discipline, a postgraduate qualification and some professional experience in at least one of the fields of construction finance, cost planning, building surveying, quantity surveying, membership of a professional body...

THE UNIVERSITY OF THE SOUTH PACIFIC FIJI

PROFESSOR OF PHYSICS

The University is upgrading the teaching of Physics to a full major in the undergraduate programme. Applications are invited for the following posts, for which applications close on the date shown...

Australian National University

SENIOR RESEARCH FELLOW/RESEARCH FELLOW/POSTDOCTORAL FELLOW

DEPARTMENT OF THEORETICAL PHYSICS James Cook University of North Queensland The Department of Theoretical Physics (Head: Professor H. J. Le Conte, F.R.S.) conducts studies of nuclear structure and nuclear reactions...

UNIVERSITY OF DUBLIN Trinity College

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The appointment will be the first made in Accounting at the University and the appointee will be based in the discipline of Accounting. The appointee will be expected to develop and organise the University's program of postgraduate Diplomas in Accounting courses which will receive the first students in March 1977.



University of Sydney POWER CHAIR OF CONTEMPORARY ART Applications are invited from scholars in the field of Fine Arts with an interest in contemporary art...

University of Adelaide

POSTDOCTORAL FELLOW IN PLANT PATHOLOGY

In the Department of Plant Pathology to cooperate with Dr. A. Kerr in a study of the genetics and/or the molecular biology of Agrobacterium. 4 March 1977.

FLINDERS UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA

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ABERYSTWYTH THE UNIVERSITY OF WALES

CHAIR OF AGRICULTURAL ECONOMY

The college council invites applications for the post of Professor of Agricultural Economics. The salary will be £3,321 to £7,108 per annum, plus pension and other benefits.

Manoush University Melbourne LECTURERS/SENIOR LECTURER DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE STUDIES Responsibilities include: undergraduate teaching and research in business planning and research with business firms for student project work.

University of Sydney LECTURER IN EDUCATION (Pre-Primary Education) Applicants should have academic and professional qualifications in early childhood education and pre-school teaching experience and past experience in the field would be an advantage.

University of Adelaide POSTDOCTORAL FELLOW IN PLANT PATHOLOGY In the Department of Plant Pathology to cooperate with Dr. A. Kerr in a study of the genetics and/or the molecular biology of Agrobacterium. 4 March 1977.

LECTURER IN ANTHROPOLOGY

The Lecturer, who should have general expertise in Anthropology/Biology with major fieldwork experience in urban, urban communities, will be expected to engage in urban research in Australia and participate in the Department's teaching programme notably in urbanisation. 11 March 1977.

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The Department of Pathology is located partly in the University Medical School and partly in the Division of Tissue Pathology of the adjacent Institute of Medical and Veterinary Science. The Division has excellent facilities for research and also in service work in surgical and necropsy pathology in the Institute. 11 March 1977.

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Nelson Guide to Careers in Education 1977-78. General Editor: Tony Howarth. Careers information and guidance for all who earn their living (or wish to earn their living) in education inside or outside the UK...

Handwritten note: 'كتاب من الارجنتين' (Book from Argentina)

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THE NORTHERN IRELAND POLYTECHNIC Faculty of Science

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Applicants should have a good Honours Degree and/or a professional qualification...

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The successful candidate will be required to lecture on a variety of mathematical topics...

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PAISLEY COLLEGE

(A Scottish Central Institution) HEAD OF DEPARTMENT OF LAND ECONOMICS

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Colleges of Further Education

BRADFORD COLLEGE School of Combined Studies... Applications are invited for the post of SENIOR LECTURER IN MANAGERIAL SOCIAL SCIENCE

Leeds POLYTECHNIC

School of Humanities and Contemporary Studies... Applications are invited for the post of SENIOR LECTURER IN CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY

School of Librarianship... Applications are invited for the post of SENIOR LECTURER II IN CATALOGUING AND MEDIA LIBRARIANSHIP

Details from: The Services Officer (MA.13) Leeds Polytechnic, Calverley Street, Leeds LS1 3HE 0532 41101.

Colleges of Art

CITY OF NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE EDUCATION COMMITTEE COLLEGE OF ARTS AND TECHNOLOGY VICE PRINCIPAL

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Universities continued

ABERYSWYTH THE UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF WALES... Applications are invited for the post of Lecturer in the Department of English.

THIRD NATIONAL CONFERENCE FOR PERSONAL TUTORS... Applications are invited for the post of Personal Tutor.

WALES ST. DAVID'S UNIVERSITY... Applications are invited for the post of Lecturer in the Department of Welsh History.

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Table with 5 columns: Position, From, To, Annual Incr't, Total Incr'm't. Rows include Professor, Associate Prof., Assistant Prof., Lecturer, Asst. Lecturer, Lab Technician.

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